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## Microsoft Office 2000 launches across the Gulf

Office 2000 promotions add to value from 'compelling' new release of the most popular productivity software in the world

**7 June 1999**

**Dubai, United Arab of Emirates**

Microsoft Gulf & Eastern Mediterranean (GEM) will announce the immediate worldwide availability of its eagerly awaited Microsoft® Office 2000 suite of office productivity tools tomorrow. Office 2000 will be launched with seminars at the Al Multaqa Ballroom at the Dubai World Trade Center complex, as well as an additional three-day launch event taking place at computer superstore CompuMe. "Microsoft Office 2000 will revolutionize the way people communicate and share information with other users, regardless of their location," said Murad Lakhdir, product marketing manager at Microsoft Gulf and Eastern Mediterranean (GEM). "We're very excited indeed about the strong feedback we've had from beta testers and early deployment sites, and we see very strong demand indeed for the suite."



As well as the seminars, which are aimed at medium to large business customers, the range of promotions taking place at CompuMe include special discount bundles of computer hardware and Office 2000, as well as free training courses and competitions being held during a special roadshow on Channel 4 FM radio on the 9th June. The first 1,000 buyers of Office 2000 who purchase their software before the end of June, and register before the 10th July, will receive a free Office 2000 T-shirt, an offer available at CompuMe and other reputable outlets across the region. "We've very excited about Office 2000 here at CompuMe, and we're delighted to be part of the launch," said Dikran Tchablakian, CEO of CompuMe. "We're aiming to add even more value and excitement to people's experience with Office 2000, and we've gone to great lengths to ensure that customers will be able to have hands-on experience with the package here in the store."

"Office 2000 will empower users to share and exchange information across multiple language platforms and will enable users to collaborate online regardless of their location. Small business users will benefit from the tools specifically designed for small businesses which will help them to manage their business information and utilize it to improve communication with customers and make better business decisions," Lakhdir explained.

Beta testers have already given the package an overwhelming 'thumbs-up': with the ability to support Arabic text within the international version of the package being a popular feature. The advanced self-repairing features and easy installation of the package were also key benefits according to testers, many of whom said that the new version was a "compelling" upgrade. Adel Al Muttawa, MIS sales and support engineer at Saudi Fal Company Limited, was typical of many testers when he singled out the Arabic language support available from international versions of Office 2000: "Amazing. I never thought that buying Office 2000 from US or Dubai would be the same. I think many Middle East users will like it as it is enabled across all Office 2000 applications with same level," he commented.

Microsoft Office 2000 has been designed for use as an individual application for personal use or as an enterprise-level desktop product that empowers users to create and share information across entire organizations. Office 2000 incorporates new deployment and management capabilities that simplify and reduce costs of deployment across an organizations network and is built on the Unicode platform that enables the office productivity suite to support world languages without the need to buy separate versions.

Office 2000 small business tools includes Microsoft's Small Business Customer Manager designed to help small businesses to efficiently track analyze and communicate customer information while importing related information from the company's accounting software to consolidate each customer's business details. "In all, there are now five key configurations available within the Office 2000 family, ranging from solutions optimized for small business through to the comprehensive Office 2000 Premium solution," said Lakhdir. "The Small Business edition, will certainly be popular in the Gulf, where many companies are in that bracket."

Office 2000 will also help large and government organizations to realize the full capabilities of their information technology (IT) infrastructure and significantly reducing cost of ownership while integrating seamlessly with the Internet and other business solutions. "Microsoft has created this product based on user demands and feedback from earlier releases of Office, this latest version will provide users with key new features that will enrich their experience and includes more applications than Microsoft Office 97," said Lakhdir.

### **About Microsoft Corporation**

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (NASDAQ "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software for personal computers. The company offers a wide range of products and services for business and personal use, each designed with the mission of making it easier and more enjoyable for people to take advantage of the full power of personal computing every day.

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Microsoft opened its Dubai-based Middle East headquarters office in 1991. This was followed by the opening of country offices in Saudi Arabia and in Egypt in 1995.

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### **About CompuME**

CompuME is the number one computer megastore in the Middle East. Its headquarters in Dubai, United Arab Emirates is home to its 30,000 squares foot flagship store, offering a choice of best-of-bread computer products from the industry's leading vendors. Focused on providing its customers the services that make owning their computer systems a pleasure, CompuME has walk-in upgrade and service centers, training facilities and expert staff to advise customers on their technology needs.

CompuME is to open new operations in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saud Arabia and Cairo, Egypt. Additional CompuME computer megastores are planned for Abu Dhabi, Jeddah, Dammam and Kuwait for the year 2000.

### **Further Information**

Press and analysts contact the Microsoft Gulf and Eastern Mediterranean Press Center:

**Helena Gilman,  
Microsoft Corporation**

**Tel:** 971 4 3973888  
**Fax:** 971 4 3972244  
**E-mail:** [helenag@microsoft.com](mailto:helenag@microsoft.com)

Non-press contact Spot On Public Relations:

**Alexander McNabb,  
Spot On Public Relations**

**Tel:** 971 4 349 1686  
**Fax:** 971 4 349 3245  
**E-mail:** [alexm@spotonpr.com](mailto:alexm@spotonpr.com)

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